



**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER**

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June 26, 2009

TO: Supervisor Don Knabe, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: Wendy L. Watanabe
Auditor-Controller

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Wendy L. Watanabe", is written over the printed name and title.

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – THE HOUSE OF
BETHESDA GROUP HOME, INC.**

We have completed a review of House of Bethesda Group Home (Group Home or Agency) operated by The House of Bethesda Group Home, Inc. The Group Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department.

The House of Bethesda Group Home is a six-bed facility, which provides care for boys ages 13-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, the Group Home was providing services for six Probation children.

The Group Home is located in the Second District.

Scope of Review

The purpose of our review is to determine whether the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. In addition, the review covers basic child safety and licensing issues and includes an evaluation of the Agency's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, employee records, a facility inspection and interviews with children placed in the Group Home at the time of the review. Interviews with children are designed to obtain their perspectives on the program services provided by the Agency and to ensure adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

Summary of Findings

Generally, the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. However, the Agency needs to address a few deficient areas. Specifically, the Group Home needs to clean, paint, repair and replace items throughout the home. The Group Home also needs to ensure that Needs and Services Plans are comprehensive and include short and long term goals.

Attached is a detailed report of the review.

Review of Report

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. In response to the recommendations made in the report, the Agency's management completed a corrective action plan (attached) which we approved. We thank the management and staff for their cooperation during our review.

If you have any questions, please contact me or have your staff contact Don Chadwick at (213) 253-0301.

WLW:MMO:JET:DC:AA:jh

Attachment

c: William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer
Patricia S. Ploehn, Director, DCFS
Ted Myers, Chief Deputy Director, DCFS
Susan Kerr, Senior Deputy Director, DCFS
Robert B. Taylor, Chief Probation Officer
Jessie Howard, Board President, The House of Bethesda Group Home, Inc.
Robert Smith, Executive Director, The House of Bethesda Group Home, Inc.
Public Information Office
Audit Committee

**The House of Bethesda Group Home, Inc.
The House of Bethesda Group Home
Lawndale, California 90260
License Number: 191601689
Rate Classification Level: 10**

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Comments:

The House of Bethesda Group Home is located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is well maintained. The front and back yards are clean and adequately landscaped.

Overall, the interior of the Group Home is adequately maintained and the Group Home provides a home-like environment. The common quarters are neat and there is adequate furniture and lighting in the Group Home. However, the walls in the kitchen, dining area and bathroom are stained. In addition, the floor moldings are dirty, the bathroom floor is lifting, and two stovetop burners are broken.

Children's bedrooms are adequately maintained and the sleeping arrangements are appropriate. The rooms are clean and orderly and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. Window coverings and window screens are in good repair and there is adequate lighting and storage space. However, one of the bed frames is broken and some of the beds do not include a full complement of linens.

The Group Home maintains age-appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV and a DVD player. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

Recommendations

1. The House of Bethesda management:

- a. Clean and paint the walls in the kitchen, dining area and bathroom.**
- b. Clean all the floor moldings.**
- c. Replace the bathroom floor.**
- d. Repair the stovetop burners.**

- e. Repair the bed frame.
- f. Ensure all beds include a full complement of linens.

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children meet the Group Home's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Children are assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement. The case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services.

The Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) are current and the treatment team develops and implements the NSPs with input from the child. However, the NSPs are not comprehensive and do not include short and long term goals.

Recommendation

- 2. The House of Bethesda Group Home management develop comprehensive Needs and Services Plans that include short and long term goals.

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

Children are attending school, are provided with educational support and resources to meet their educational needs, and are progressing satisfactorily in school. The Group Home's program includes the development of children's daily living, self-help and survival skills. Children are provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Recommendation

None.

IV. Recreation and Activities**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews****Sample size: Two****Comments:**

The Group Home provides children with sufficient recreational activities and leisure time. Children are provided with opportunities to participate in planning activities. Children also participate in extra-curricular, enrichment and social activities in which they have an interest. The Group Home provides transportation to and from the activities.

Recommendation**None.****V. Psychotropic Medication****Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents****Comments:**

According to the Agency's management, there are currently no children taking psychotropic medications. This information is appropriately documented.

Children are aware of their right to refuse medication.

Recommendation**None.****VI. Personal Rights****Method of assessment – Interviews with children****Sample size: Two****Comments:**

Children are informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures. Children report that they feel safe in the Group Home and are provided with appropriate staff supervision. Children express satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff and report that the staff treats them with respect and dignity.

Children report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children are allowed to make and receive personal telephone calls, send and receive unopened mail, have private visitors, and attend religious services of their choice.

Children report that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks. Children also receive voluntary medical, dental and psychiatric care.

Recommendation

None.

VII. Clothing and Allowance

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews

Sample size: Two

Comments:

The Group Home provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity and the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance to children. Children are provided with opportunities to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to children is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

The Group Home provides children with the required minimum weekly allowance. Children spend their allowances as they choose.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items. Children are also encouraged and assisted in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

Recommendation

None.

VIII. Personnel Background Checks

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents

Sample size for employee record evaluation: Five

Comments:

The Group Home has obtained the required criminal and child abuse clearances for their employees.

Recommendation

None.

The House of Bethesda Group Home, Inc.

February 20, 2009

Attention: Candace Rhue, Group Home Audit Department of Auditor- Controller,

Children's Group Home Ombudsman Division
350 S. Figueroa St. 8th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90071

Dear Ms. Rhue:

This *Corrective Action Plan* is in response to your letter date February 4, 2009.

We are pleased to be able to favorably respond to the cited/noted recommendations.

I. Facility and Environment

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The House of Bethesda Management:

- a. Clean and paint the walls in the kitchen, dining area and bathroom.
Corrective Action Plan: The management at the House of Bethesda will clean and paint the walls in the kitchen, dinning area and bathroom. **(has been completed).**
- b. Paint the floor moldings throughout moldings throughout the house.
Corrective Action Plan: The floor molding will be painted throughout the house by **April 2, 2009.**
- c. Replace the bathroom floor
Corrective Action Plan: The bathroom floor will be replaced by **(has been completed).**
- d. Repair the burners on the stovetop
Corrective Action Plan: The burners on the stove top will be repaired **(has been completed).**
- e. Repair the bed frame.
Corrective Action Plan: The bed frame will be repaired. **(has been completed)**

f. Provide all beds with full complement of linen

Corrective Action Plan: All beds will be routinely made with a full complement of linen effective immediately.

II. Program Services

Recommendations

The House of Bethesda Group Home management develops NSP's that are comprehensive and incline short and long term goals.

Corrective Action Plan: The House of Bethesda Group management will ensure the development of comprehensive NSP's effective immediately

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. Recreation and Activities

There are no recommendations for this section.

V. Psychotropic Medication

There are no recommendations for this section

VI. Personal Rights

There are no recommendations for this section

VII. Clothing and Allowance

There are no recommendations for this section

VIII. Personal Background Checks

There are no recommendations for this section

Aline Smith, Ph.D., MFT

Aline Smith, Ph.D., MFT
Administrator

(310) 675-1444